

House Republicans Continue to Target Seniors, Middle Class, Most Vulnerable in Extreme Budget

This week, Republicans will continue to outline additional details of their extreme budget that ends the Medicare guarantee, destroys jobs, and cuts taxes for the wealthy. In Committee hearings this week, Republicans are expected to lay out cuts that undermine health care coverage and target our federal employees in order to preserve tax cuts for the wealthy:

- Eliminating the Medicaid and CHIP Maintenance-of-Effort (MOE) requirement included as part of the Affordable Care Act, putting 300,000 children at risk of losing health insurance coverage, according to CBO.
- Cutting the Prevention and Public Health Fund, which provided 61 communities and states with funding in fiscal year 2011 to implement health and wellness programs and benefitted approximately 120 million Americans, according to HHS.
- Cutting gross federal employee pay by 5% by increasing employee contributions to FERS (from 0.8% to 5.8% of gross salary) and CSRS (from 7% to 12% of gross salary) pension programs, at a time when federal employees are already experiencing effects of a two-year pay freeze.

These new details come on top of specific cuts Republicans laid out last week that target the most vulnerable among us and put our economy at risk:

- Slashing food stamps by \$33.2 billion at a time when families can least afford it: *“An average family of four would face an 11 percent cut in monthly benefits after Sept. 1 and, even more important, tighter enforcement of rules would require that households exhaust most of their liquid assets before qualifying for help. This hits hardest among the long-term unemployed, who would be forced off the rolls until they have spent down their savings to less than \$2,000 in many cases.”* [\[Politico, 4/16/12\]](#)
- Permanently eliminating the Social Services Block Grant program, which provides assistance for roughly 23 million Americans, including:
 - Child care and related assistance for 4.4 million children,
 - “Meals on Wheels” and other home-based services for nearly 1.7 million older Americans,
 - Child protective services for 1.8 million at-risk children,
 - Transportation, respite care and other services for nearly 1 million disabled individuals.
- Putting our nation at risk of another financial crisis by ending our ability to deal with banks that are “too big to fail.”
- Politicizing the process of funding the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, an office created to protect consumers from predatory practices that contributed to the financial crisis.

Democrats agree we must take serious action to reduce the deficit, but not by targeting critical programs that millions of Americans rely on. We need a balanced deficit reduction plan that calls on all Americans to pay their fair share. But unfortunately, Republicans have made their priorities clear: cutting taxes for the wealthy at the expense of seniors, the middle class, and the most vulnerable among us.

Office of Democratic Whip Steny H. Hoyer, 4/24/12